

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, July 1. 1707.

I Think, I have sufficiently answer'd a Reproach as foolish, as scandalous, upon the Subject of using the Lords Prayer in publick Worship in *Scotland*.

Well, Gentlemen, and is this all now? Is this the best thing you can bring upon the Stage to keep up Differences, and widen Breaches between Nations? What is it to a publick Union of Interests, Nations and Affections, whether the Lords Prayer be used at the Conclusion or at the Beginning, or whether taking it only as a Directory of Prayer, it is the Guide of the Particulars, and he that prays, observing it in the Manner and Scope of his Performance, prays it over both in Words and in the Sense of it too, which I have heard done in both Nations—Where is the essential Difference between you now, that either in one Part or another it should be brought up as a Distinction of Reproach?

To what a Loss are the Fomenters of our Breaches reduc'd, that they are fain to rumage in the Sink of old stagnated Debates, for something to form new Prejudices about; if this were referr'd to a publick Decision of any of the Protestant Churches abroad, would they not think us a very strange Sort of People, that we should pretend to quarrel with one another upon such weak Foundations. I omit the Clergymans Forgery, as a thing spoken to already, and indeed not meriting to be spoken to at all. But really, supposing all that is now debated were Matter of Fact, 'tis a sorry Trifle to divide a Nation about, 'tis a very mean thing to be ever fighting and jarring about, and proportion'd to it are all the religious Debates now among us.

And yet if they were more considerable, 'tis not a Ground of Debate, now the Bounds

Bounds of Parties are fully fix'd, the stated Dimensions of Right are settled by Law, and cannot be invaded on either hand; to quarrel about it then must needs be Non-sense and ridiculous.

I could now turn to the *North*, and there find equal Fault with the Forgeries of another Party, and particularly that of Mr. *H—s* imposing it upon the People, that the Members of the Parliament of *Britain* must take the Sacrament of the Church of *England*, before they can be admitted to sit in the House of *Commons*; this had been so maliciously tim'd, and was spread so far, that I confess, I have been frequently surpriz'd to find Men of the best Reading and clearest Judgment impos'd upon by it, and I think myself happy, that I came into *Scotland* timely enough to detect it; not but that it would have been detected at last, but I mean to detect it in the very juncture, when the Mischief, it was calculated for, was transacting, I mean the Treaty.

It is no little Satisfaction to those, who have appear'd for this Union, that the principal Opposition, which has been made against it, has been founded upon such Originals as these, and the Opposers have for the most Part been supported by these Mistakes, either willfully made, or being impos'd upon to believe, what others have maliciously suggested, they have been misled into it.

And what is the Reason, that since we have seen the Union perfected, we find so many Converts to the Union in both Kingdoms?—The Case is very plain, the Gentlemen have liv'd to see into the Fallacies of the Pretences formerly made against it; they have seen the Frauds and the Designs of the Contrivers, and a little of the Characters of them too; they have seen, who were acting against it, and upon little Enquiry see also into the Principle from whence they acted against it——

How many have I seen in this short while come off from their Opposition, and fairly acknowledge, they begin to see into the general Good of it; that they were once of another Opinion, but are now convinc'd! How many have I seen acknowledging, they see the Finger of GOD in it, and they hope

from it now, as much as they fear'd from it before.

Indeed these Converts are to be valu'd, because being honest, they will obey the Dictates of their Reasons——And not be ashamed to own a Mistake, when they see it. —But how come these Gentlemen to be so fatally mistaken, as to stand in their own Light, and in the Light of their Country, and in the way of its Happiness before? How came they to kick against the Pricks, and struggle against the Felicity and Liberty of their Native Country? Truly nothing, but by being impos'd upon with the Fallacies, Forgeries and open Delusions of a Party, who continually spreading sham Reports, raising Alarms, and with an unusual Confidence asserting false and feign'd Stories, amus'd them, impos'd upon them, and blinded their Understandings.

And this effectually justifies me to my own Thoughts, that there really is a Necessity to exclaim against these Destroyers of their Country's Peace; that there cannot be a more useful thing undertaken, than to detect the busy and malicious Forgeries, which the Enemies of the Union and Peace of this Island industriously spread abroad.

To confront these People with Truth, Fact and Experience, is my Business, and this Paper can have no greater Honour, than to be thus employ'd; nor can I desire greater Success, than effectually to open the Eyes of any People, who on either side fall under the Power of these Delusions.

The next and most notorious Slander, which has been, and that with but too much Success spread over these Kingdoms, is, that the Church of *Scotland* is of persecuting Principles; that they reject all Terms with the Episcopal Clergy, that they have been persecuted, prosecuted, mobb'd, rabbled and plunder'd, only upon the Account of their Religion and for mere Conscience, and several large Pamphlets have been wrote upon this Subject, which having not been effectually answer'd, or that Case stated in a true Light, has fatally wrought upon the Judgment and Charity of a great many sober People in the *South*, who having a little too hastily receiv'd the Impression of its being true in Fact, cannot entertain Thoughts

Thoughts of their Brethren, so suitable to their new Relation; as they ought to do, and consequently are not so well pleas'd with the Union as they ought, and otherwise would be.

I cannot immediately enter into the Merits of this Cause, having the other two Parts of the reciprocal Duty of both Nations to one another before me, and being loth to make too long a Digression; but if when I come to

it, I do not prove, that the Church of *Scotland* is as far from Persecution, as any Church in the World; that the Episcopal Party have receiv'd no Severities from the Church, nor been in the least persecuted by the Church, but on the contrary treated with the utmost Temper and Moderation, then I do nothing at all; and I shall freely refer it to the Testimony of all indifferent Persons.

MISCELLANEA.

YOU are a very partial Writer, says a new Antagonist, who is risen up against this Paper, upon my giving my Opinion in the Matter of a Battle in *Flanders*, as in my two last Papers— You put all the fatal Part of a Battle on the French side, and care not to suppose, a Battle may happen, and you may be worsted; and you never think it worth your while to examine, how it will stand with our side, if we should be beaten?

Why really, Sir, I did not meddle with this, principally because it was no Part of the Enquiry in the Letter I receiv'd, as may be seen by the Copy; and partly because I see no great Reason, Blessed be GOD, to fear the Circumstance, and therefore the Consequences are not a Part of my Concern.

But since I am put to it, I have been always forward enough to tell the People the worst of things, and set them a considering decently their bad as well as good Fortune, and I shall not decline it now.

And first I'll own, that had we receiv'd four such Overthrows, as I may call them, as the French have at *Hockstet*, *Barcelona*, *Ramellies* and *Turin*, I would not be thought to lessen the Conduct of any Body, nor is it a lessning to them, we had been all undone; it had been no Confederacy by this Time, every Body had been shifting for themselves, making their Peace, &c. separate Treaties, abandoning of Parties and Friends had been the general Complaint, and France had bid fair for universal Monarch of Christendom long ago.

To come to Particulars, the Duke of *Savoy* had been entirely suppress'd, the Emperor depos'd, the *Fremb* had probably annex'd *Savoy* and *Piedmont* to the Crown, and the *Bavarian* had been crown'd in *Vienna*, where he had been at full Liberty to have reduc'd the Electors to accept of his Sovereignty, and at best have so embarrass'd Germany, that *England* and *Holland* having no Help from the Princes of the North, would have had the whole Power of France to contend with single-handed.

I need ravel no farther into this melancholy Scheme, Thanks be to GOD, this has not been our Fate, and its being not come to that, leads me to say, that should the Disaster of a Battle in *Flanders* fall upon us, we are not in so bad a Posture; no not to lose a Battle, as we were before— And tho' it would indeed give a great Blow to our Affairs, and revive the drooping Condition of France to a great Degree, yet all the Consequence would be the Continuance of the War, and putting us to exert new Strengths, double our Forces, and fall on afresh. A Loss on our side would only postpone and adjourn the Peace, and a Loss on their side must hasten it. The Reason is plain, we fight for a Peace, and we must have it; we fight to recover ravish'd Kingdoms, to suppress ambitious Violence, and restore National Liberty, and we must obtain it; we cannot lay down our Arms, till this is obtain'd: The Enemy fights only to maintain his Oppressions, keep the Hold be

has taken of the Properties of his Neighbours, and support his unjust Usurpations; whenever he is made willing to disgorge his unjust Acquisitions; whenever he pleases to sit down content to reign over his own Subjects only, and abate his Tyranny; whenever he will disarm, and be a peaceable Neighbour, Peace will follow; the Contender fights not for Conquest, but for Peace and Liberty; if he will bring Conquest upon himself, that is for him to consider of.

Thus there is a manifest Difference in Case of a Loss on our side, and a Loss on his; we shall be set back in the desirable End of the War, PEACE; but he will be entirely undone, and broken to pieces— And this is plain in the Case of two Battles, one on our side, one on his side, I mean, the Battle of *Turin* in which the *French* were overthrown, and the Battle of *Almanza* in which we have the same Fate; and I shall state the Case in the next Review.

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